MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD **June 27, 2023**

SUBJECT: TIER 1 EVALUATION FOR THE SPLASH DAM LIBERATION ON BAIRD CREEK IN COWLITZ COUNTY, WASHINGTON (NWS-2023-300).

Introduction.

This memorandum documents the Tier 1 evaluation conducted by the applicable Dredged Material Management Program (DMMP) agencies (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 10, and Washington State Department of Ecology).

Project.

The applicant, Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group, is proposing a fish habitat restoration project located on Baird Creek, a tributary of the Coweeman river located at Weyerhaeuser's St. Helens Tree Farm (Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 26) with latitude and longitude of 46.18900°N and -122.570498°W. In order to establish fish passage upstream in Baird Creek, a historic splash dam (built in 1901) will be partially demolished. The dam was originally around 100 feet tall but has been partially degraded to its current size of about 30 feet tall by 100 feet wide and 150 feet long. The structure was used to create a reservoir to store water that was intermittently released to flush logs downstream.

The sediments are layered and include both coarse materials that were present prior to construction of the dam and finer sediments that settled into the reservoir created by the structure. The dam structure is currently porous and subject to recurrent clogging, fills, and sporadic release of materials. The dam removal is projected to mobilize approximately 37,000 cubic yards of impounded sediment. The sediment release would be accelerated by placing wood in the channel within the impoundment reach.

Tier 1 Evaluation.

Available data was obtained and reviewed by the Dredged Material Management Office (DMMO) in order to evaluate the project location's sediment chemical quality and understand whether sources of contamination could have historically impacted or currently be impacting the project site. The following resources were reviewed to conduct this evaluation:

1. Previous studies, suitability determinations or antidegradation assessments conducted by DMMO or other agencies. No previous assessments were conducted at this site.
2. Ecology's Environmental Information Management (EIM) Database. A search was conducted to look at chemical or biological data within the vicinity of the project location. There are no relevant data sources of potential contamination to the project location.
3. Ecology's "What's In My Neighborhood" Site Cleanup Database. A search was conducted to look at historical and active cleanup sites near the project location. There are no identified historical or active cleanup sites that would be a source of contamination to the project location.
4. Ecology's Spill Map. A search was conducted to look at spills near the project location. No spills were reported near the project location.

No Test Determination.

The project is in a remote forested area with no cleanup sites nearby. Due to the remote location away from anthropogenic sources, the potential for contamination to be present is low and "like on like placement" is not anticipated to degrade the downstream receptor area. Additionally, the sediment surface exposed after the impounded sediment has been allowed to naturally release will likely meet

the State of Washington antidegradation standard, and therefore, no DMMP testing of the leave surface is required for this project.

The DMMP agencies have determined that no testing is required for this project based on Clean Water Act Subpart G, Section 230.60(b)(6)(c) which states: where the discharge site is adjacent to the extraction site and subject to the same sources of contaminants, and materials at the two sites are substantially similar, the fact that the material to be discharged may be a carrier of contaminants is not likely to result in degradation of the receiving site. In such circumstances, when dissolved material and suspended particulates can be controlled to prevent carrying pollutants to less contaminated areas, testing will not be required.

This antidegradation determination does not constitute final agency approval of the project. During the public comment period that follows a public notice, resource agencies will provide input on the overall project. A final decision will be made after full consideration of agency input, and after an alternatives analysis is done under section 404(b)(1) of the Clean Water Act.

References.

DMMP 2021. Dredged Material Evaluation and Disposal Procedures (User Manual). Dredged Material Management Program, updated July 2021.

Ecology's EIM Database Search: https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/eim/search/default.aspx

Ecology's What's in My Neighborhood Search: https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/neighborhood/

Ecology's Spill Incidents Database: https://ecology.wa.gov/Spills-Cleanup/Spills/Spill-preparedness-response/Responding-to-spill-incidents/Spill-incidents

Washington State's JARPA Form for # NWS-2023-300 provided to USACE Regulatory Branch

Agency Signatures.

The signed copy is on file in the Dredged Material Management Office, Seattle District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

_____	_____
Date	Brian Hester – U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District
_____	_____
Date	Sarah Burgess – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
_____	_____
Date	Laura Inouye, PhD. – Washington State Department of Ecology
_____	_____
Date	Shannon Soto – Washington State Department of Natural Resources

Copies Furnished:

DMMP agencies

Brad Johnson, USACE Regulatory Project Manager

Brice Crayne, Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group

DMMO File